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**STATEMENT BY
MR. ALEKSANDR VOLGAREV, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1495th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

7 November 2024

**On the address by the United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General
for Children and Armed Conflict**

Madam Chairperson,

We welcome Ms. Virginia Gamba, United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, to the Permanent Council. Before moving on to our statement, I should like to return to your introductory comments, Madam Chairperson, which were frankly one-sided, biased and unacceptable. Such remarks are completely inadmissible for representatives of the OSCE Chairmanship, speaking in a non-national capacity, who are obliged to base their statements on consensus language agreed upon by all participating States.

Madam Special Representative,

Russia has consistently placed a high priority on engaging with you and your Office. We appreciate the trusting dialogue that has developed between us in the interests of resolving the situation of children in armed conflicts in various regions of the world, including in the context of the Ukraine issue. We note your willingness to engage in mutually respectful dialogue and your receptiveness to the arguments of the parties.

We remain interested in principle in your visit to Russia, to Moscow and to the areas that are regularly shelled by the Ukrainian armed forces, including the People's Republics of Donetsk and Lugansk and the Belgorod, Zaporozhye, Kursk and Kherson regions. We believe that such a visit would permit a clear demonstration of the effectiveness of the measures taken by our country to respect children's rights in the zone of the special military operation, and also not only dispel rumours about the alleged involvement of the Russian armed forces in the crimes attributed to them, but also provide convincing evidence of the atrocities committed by the Ukrainian military against civilians on Russian territory.

Russia strongly condemns any unlawful acts against children, wherever they occur and by whomever they are committed. All perpetrators must be held accountable in strict compliance with the norms of national and international law.

We regret that the United Nations Secretary-General's report on children and armed conflict continues to list our country among those responsible for the most serious violations against minors. However, the crimes of the illegitimate regime in Kyiv are not included in this list at all. A reasonable question arises: why?

In our view, such double standards and politicization are unacceptable for the staff of the secretariat of a world organization. The Secretary-General's reports should be based as a mandatory requirement on reliable and objective information. Only in this way can we expect to build constructive and effective co-operation between different structures and Member States, including on children's issues.

Moreover, Russia regularly transmits to the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict up-to-date data on the situation of children in Ukraine, and in the People's Republics of Donetsk and Lugansk and the Kherson, Zaporozhye and other regions of Russia suffering from the atrocities of the Kyiv regime. In particular, we are referring to information about crimes against children by the Ukrainian armed forces: fatalities and injuries as a result of shelling, the use of educational institutions for military purposes, and the denial of humanitarian access. These cases are recorded and verified by Russia on a regular basis and should be reflected without fail in the relevant reports.

In addition, in July this year you received the final report of the Parliamentary Commission on the Investigation of Crimes Committed by the Kyiv Regime against Minors and a bulletin on the activities of the Russian Presidential Commissioner for Children's Rights, Maria Lvova-Belova, during the special military operation. We assume that the information contained in these documents will be duly taken into account in the relevant statistics and assessed in an appropriate manner by the United Nations.

Madam Special Representative,

In the interests of avoiding casualties among the civilian population, especially children, the Russian armed forces conducting the special military operation adhere strictly to the norms of international humanitarian law, which are enshrined in the federal and departmental regulations listed in the Package of Measures to Prevent Violations against Children. We intend to continue to transmit memoranda on the fulfilment by the Russian armed forces of the provisions of this document. Unfortunately, the quarterly note on children and armed conflict circulated to the members of the United Nations Security Council in September this year also twists the facts in favour of Ukraine.

In concluding, we should like to confirm our readiness to maintain regular working contacts with the Special Representative on the entire range of issues related to the protection of children in conflict situations. We also intend to continue feeding your Office with up-to-date data on the situation of children in Ukraine, and in the People's Republics of Donetsk and Lugansk and the Kherson, Zaporozhye and other regions of Russia suffering from the atrocities of the Kyiv regime.

Thank you for your attention.